

The Christian Ministry: its Constitution and its Duties.

THE
S E R M O N

22

PREACHED IN

TRINITY CHURCH, MUSCATINE, IOWA,

ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1864,

AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE

REV. THOMAS HUBBARD VAIL, D. D.,

RECTOR OF THAT PARISH,

AS BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF KANSAS.

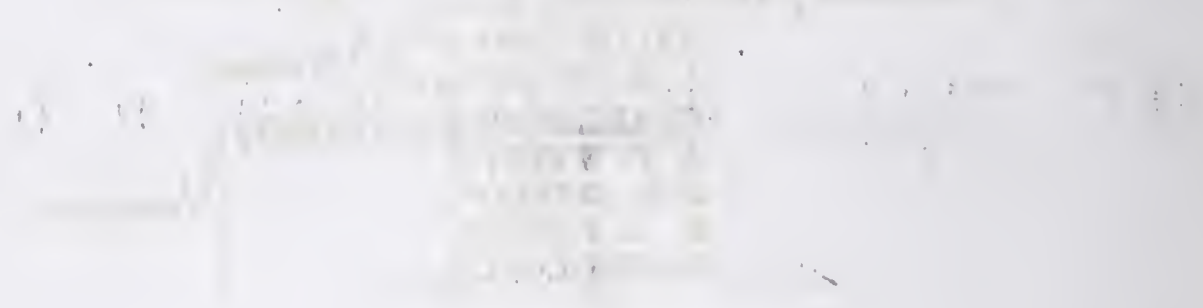
BY THE

RT. REV. HENRY W. LEE, D. D.,

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF IOWA.

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MUSCATINE, IOWA, December 15, 1864.

To the Rt. Rev. H. W. LEE, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa:

DEAR BISHOP:—At a meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of Trinity Church, convened immediately at the conclusion of the services this morning, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That we respectfully solicit from the Rt. Rev. Bishop LEE, D. D., for publication, a copy of the admirable and appropriate sermon preached by him this morning, at the consecration of our Rector, the Rev. Dr. VAIL, to the Episcopate of the Diocese of Kansas; believing that its publication will not only furnish to many a pleasant memorial of a solemnity very interesting to the members of this parish and community, but will be of permanent value as a clear and convincing exhibition of most important and practical teachings of the Word of God.

Will you favor us by complying with the request herein conveyed?

Affectionately and obediently yours,

JACOB COMPTON, }
J. B. DOUGHERTY, } Wardens.

CHARLES EDWARD KENT, }
J. P. WALTON, }
J. G. GORDON, } Vestrymen.
S. A. FOULKE, }
MOSES COUCH, }

DAVENPORT, Dec. 20, 1864.

DEAR BRETHREN:

I have received your kind request, and the sermon is herewith placed at your disposal. A few sentences will appear that were not delivered, and some unimportant things that were extemporaneously uttered are omitted. If the discourse, in its more permanent form, shall promote, in any measure, the welfare of our beloved Church, and the cause of true religion; and serve as a fitting tribute to your late Rector, now invested with the responsibilities of the Episcopal office, I shall be content.

Your affectionate

Friend and Bishop,

HENRY W. LEE.

To the Wardens and Vestrymen of Trinity Church, Muscatine.



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SERMON.

II. TIMOTHY, IV. 5. *“ Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”*

Ephesus was a celebrated city of Ionia, in Asia Minor; and it was the scene of many events of peculiar interest, both to the scholar and to the Christian. It was renowned as one of the chief seats of the arts and sciences in the perfection which, two thousand years ago, they had attained among mankind. Its specimens of architecture were majestic and imposing. Here was the temple of the goddess Diana, the grandeur of which attracted multitudes of strangers from various parts of the world. With a length of more than four hundred feet, and a breadth of more than two hundred, and with its hundred and twenty-seven pillars, presented by as many kings, extending aloft sixty feet; it was an object of magnificence vieing with the temple at Jerusalem. All the provinces of Asia contributed to the expense of its erection, and we are told that two hundred years were employed in its completion. “Most illustrious,” was one of the titles given to this renowned city, and Pliny calls it the “ornament of Asia.”

But, after all, the people that thronged its streets, and crowded its splendid temples, were given to idolatry. With

all their knowledge, they were ignorant of the one living and true God. In her schools and in her halls science gave no instruction to lift the thoughts of her votaries to the High and Holy One who inhabits eternity; and the multitude, with the light of human philosophy beaming around them, were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, having the understanding darkened and the mind blinded. Hence it came to pass that they lived in the constant commission of the grossest sins, disgraceful to human nature, and highly offensive to a God of infinite purity and holiness. They were emphatically “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

It was to such a place, and under such untoward circumstances, that Timothy was sent when he undertook the Episcopate of Ephesus. The text shows both that he was entrusted with a high and responsible charge, and the manner in which its sacred duties were to be fulfilled.

Without any labored argument to prove that Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus, in the sense in which the word “Bishop” is now used; I would still make the assertion that he has generally been so regarded and represented in all the ages of the Christian Church; and that he is evidently addressed by St. Paul in a manner which conclusively shows that his office was a peculiar one, such as was not held by the ministers of Christ as a body. He was an Overseer, an Ordainer, and a Ruler, in the Ephesian Church; and as such he was exhorted by St. Paul to watch in all things, to endure afflictions, to do the work of an evangelist, and to make full proof of his ministry.*

* An attempt has often been made to prove that Timothy was not set apart to the Episcopate, because St. Paul says to him, in his first Epistle, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*.” But the word translated *presbytery* may denote an ecclesiastical council, without respect to grade of office. The Apostle himself interprets the meaning by stating, in his second Epistle, that he himself was the ordainer of Timothy. “I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is given thee by the putting on of my hands.” We have good reason to believe that the council that ordained Timothy was composed wholly of Apostles; but as St. Paul was one, and not the least conspicuous, we shall claim that he refers to Timothy’s ordination to the Episcopate by himself, and not to an ordination by Presbyters. Bishop Kemper might speak of Bishop Vail as consecrated by himself, because he presided at his consecration, and took the chief part in the solemn act.

I. The text, as well as the solemn and interesting occasion on which we are now assembled, suggests, as the first point for our consideration, *the Constitution of the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.*

Under this general head, we may briefly notice, as introductory to what is to follow, the truth that *the LORD JESUS CHRIST established a Church, or spiritual Society, on the earth.*

Every organized Society must consist of officers and of ordinary members. That Society in which God hath placed men to regulate its concerns, must be an organized body. The Church is that Society in which God set some as officers, such as Apostles, Prophets and Teachers; and therefore the Church must be a regularly organized body. That which is described as built upon a rock, as gathered together, as edified, as a subject of persecution, as made havoc of, as having a head, body and members,—can be nothing else than an organized Society. That which the Lord Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to “feed,” and that of which an inspired Apostle could speak in the following language: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood;” can be no other than a body regularly organized, with offices and rules adapted to its condition and character. If to all this be added the promise made to the Church by its Divine Founder, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” the permanency of this Institution or Society must be as evident as its establishment.

It is not intended, in making this proposition, to touch the question, so much discussed, of an invisible Church, consisting of all true believers; but simply to assert the historical fact that Christ did establish a visible Church on the earth, as a regularly organized body, made up of officers and ordinary members. What is meant by an invisible Church, as composed of all who are truly united to Christ as the Lord their Righteousness, and as their all in all, is something that I fully recognize as a deep and important spiritual truth, a truth set forth in the precious doctrine of “the Communion of Saints,”

and a truth implied in the general tenor of the Word of God ; but this does not at all interfere with the other truth, that there is an outward Church, composed of all who are baptized, and who are thus that visible body who profess and call themselves Christians, ordinarily under the charge of those who, as ministers and stewards of the Divine mysteries, watch for their souls, and break unto them the bread of life. * This body is referred to in our Nineteenth Article of Religion, which says, “ The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”

It was in this Church that a regular Ministry was appointed by Christ himself, and continued by inspired men, to be transmitted from age to age, even unto the final consummation of all things.

The commission that Christ gave to His eleven Apostles is ample testimony to this point. It was after His resurrection, and not long before His ascension, that He summoned them to a place of retirement, and addressed to them these solemn words : “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

It would be difficult to imagine a mode more solemn or explicit, by which men could be invested with an office ; or to conceive of language more plain in which the perpetuity of the office could be promised.

The ordination of Matthias, of the seven Deacons, of Timothy and Titus, and of the elders of Crete, is evidence of the power by which the Apostles were invested by this commission. That certain men are spoken of as ambassadors for Christ, as stewards of the mysteries of God, as Apostles, Bishops, Prophets, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, Evangelists, and Angels of the Churches, will not be denied by any reader of the sacred writings. These are spoken of as preaching the

Gospel, as baptizing, or as acting in some other official capacity in the Church; thus showing that the Lord Jesus Christ has not only established a visible Church on earth, but also that He has placed in it a Ministry that is to be perpetuated as long as the Church itself, or until time shall be no more.

I now remark, that this Ministry, as originally appointed, and continued in the Church, consisted and still consists of three separate grades or orders, each having its peculiar duties and prerogatives, but unitedly constituting what the Apostle Paul denominates "the Ministry of reconciliation."

The teaching of our Church on this point is briefly set forth in these words: "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." This statement is made with the wise moderation that is so characteristic of our authorized standards. In regard to its interpretation, there are wide differences of opinion among ourselves; some believing that Episcopacy and the three orders are essential to the very existence of the Ministry; and others considering them as only necessary to its regularity. We agree, however, practically; inasmuch as all our Clergy have Episcopal ordination, and would be satisfied with no other; and all our people, in their parochial capacity, demand an Episcopal Ministry, and would be satisfied with no other. That feature of our Church which allows a diversity of views on such points as the one now referred to, while we all adhere to the same general standards of doctrine and order, is one of great value and importance; and the fact that it is a feature of our Church should keep us from that uncharitableness and censoriousness which too commonly characterize those who hold different opinions even upon subjects of comparatively little consequence.* The subject in question is not one of small importance; but yet it is one in regard to which there have always been various opinions in the Church; and so long as we all

*An excellent and valuable work, entitled "*The Comprehensive Church*," by the Rev. THOMAS H. VAIL, A. M., was published in 1841. The subject therein discussed deserves the serious consideration of all Christian people.

assent to the authoritative statement already quoted, we should not judge one another harshly or unkindly. It is not declared that the three grades are of the *essence* of the Ministry, but that they have existed in the Church from the days of the Apostles; the inference being a natural and necessary one, that a Ministry not having these grades is not after the Apostolic pattern, being therefore deficient in regularity and order; though capable of doing good to the souls of men, because it may faithfully preach the saving truths of the Gospel, and with sincerity and honesty of purpose may discharge the other functions of the sacred office. There is a broad and most important distinction between the regularity and the validity of an official act; but we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have a Ministry whose official acts are both regular and valid at the same time,—a Ministry having a well-attested historical connection with that to which the Apostles personally belonged, and whose regularity and validity are freely and fully conceded by all those ecclesiastical bodies which themselves do not retain the three orders, and which reject Episcopacy as in any sense binding upon those who would exercise the ministerial office, or do their duty as private members of the Church.

The argument in proof of a three-fold Ministry is drawn primarily from the Word of God; though corroborated by ancient authors, and the history of the Church in all ages.

Some ambiguity is occasioned, in connection with this subject, by the promiscuous use of names, different names being employed to designate the same office. We place the proposition now before us on the ground of *office*; and we consider it proved when we give evidence that the Church, under the direction and government of inspired men, had in it three distinct and separate grades of offices.

When our blessed Lord was on the earth, He was, in the highest sense, the Bishop of the infant Church. Under Him were the twelve, in a secondary grade; and below these the seventy, in a third grade. I do not, however, cite the three grades in this example as strictly identical with the three orders of the Christian Ministry; for this Ministry, in its spe-

cific form, was not fully established until after Christ's resurrection and ascension. But I refer to it as exhibiting an imparity and subordination of offices authorized by Christ himself, and as the foreshadowing, under His direction, of the very three-fold ministry which was afterwards specifically instituted. Before His ascension, Christ solemnly advanced the Apostles to the Episcopal office, by imparting to them new ministerial powers; and in the subsequent history of the Church, we find them exercising these peculiar powers, in ordaining, confirming, and in acts of jurisdiction. In addition to the Apostles, there were two other grades of Ministers, viz: Presbyters or Elders, and the lower grade of Deacons. The Presbyters or Elders were also called Bishops, the highest order being then called Apostles. It was with especial though not exclusive reference to this use of the word "Bishop," that the remark was just made that some ambiguity exists in the New Testament from a promiscuous employment of different names to designate the same office. After the Apostles departed this life, their official successors were soon exclusively called Bishops, and by common consent the three orders were called Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. These orders were apparently foreshadowed by the three orders of the Jewish Ministry; and now, after the lapse of long ages, they are recognized by the great body of professing Christians throughout the world.

In examining the New Testament, we find St. Paul, in the twelfth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, in the twenty-eighth verse, expressing himself as follows, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost: "God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." The first three we consider as ordinary officers in the Church; but the others, for the most part, as extraordinary powers that ceased with the discontinuance of extraordinary inspiration. The scope of the passage, as well as the peculiar and definite manner of expression, can leave but little room for doubt as to the sense of the language employed. The Apostle had been writing of the Lord's Sup-

per, and of the Church as made up of many members ; and, comparing it with the human body, he had shown the necessity of the preservation of the several parts to the preservation of the whole ; and, explaining how when one member suffers, all the members must suffer with it, he describes it as collectively one body. After pursuing this comparison to an unusual length, he concludes it by saying to the Corinthian Christians, "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." This body, that is composed of so many members, and in which there should be no schism, is none other than the Christian Church. Then, dropping the figure, he says, "And God hath set some in the Church," or in this body of which Christ is the Head. To set means, in the original, to ordain ; so that St. Paul here declares that God hath ordained in the Church the several grades of officers which are designated as Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers. The numerical order of expression is peculiar to this passage. The language is specific. God is the Author, the Church the subject, the offices are stated, and stated too in numerical order. The Apostles were the highest grade. Those called Prophets were probably the same as those called Elders ; and they were called Prophets, because their principal duty was to preach the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and to explain and apply the prophecies respecting Christ. The Teachers were ministers of a distinct and separate grade, who labored in word and doctrine in a subordinate capacity, but were an important constituent of the appointed and ordained Ministry. If God, as the Apostle says, set these three orders *in the Church*, it would seem certainly that they must permanently appertain to the Church.

In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul mentions, besides Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers, what he calls Evangelists and Pastors. But he does not say that these last are *set in the Church* ; and it seems evident that they were not distinct orders in the Ministry, but were distinguished by the duties of the Ministry which they particularly performed. We shall soon see what was meant by the first of these names, for it was virtually applied to Timothy

in the text. Pastors were stationary ministers, who had the charge of some particular flock or parish; but they were evidently not a separate order of the Ministry.

Passing by various passages which plainly refer to the divers orders which are set or ordained in the Church, I ask your attention to the case of the Philippians, as furnishing important incidental testimony in behalf of our present position. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Church at Philippi, addressed "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons;" and in the same Epistle, he calls Epaphroditus their Apostle. This Church, therefore, with an Apostle, Bishops, and Deacons, gives us evidence of the existence of an ecclesiastical body with three distinct and separate ministerial offices; the term Bishop, as we have already seen, designating the second order during the life-time of the Apostles, and being afterwards transferred to those who, though not Apostles in the fullest sense, were yet their official successors, in ordaining ministers, and overseeing the general interests of the Church.

The argument from the Scriptures, which I have stated briefly and very imperfectly, is strongly confirmed by the fact that from the earliest times, after the death of the Apostles, the three-fold Ministry has existed in the Church of Christ. Four-fifths, if not nine-tenths, of all the professing Christians on the earth now recognize this kind of Ministry; and the proportion was still larger in earlier ages, so that as we approach primitive times we find no exception to the rule, and all Christendom was truly and strictly Episcopal, in the grades of the Ministry, and in the government of the Church. The office of a Bishop, therefore, about to be conferred upon the respected and beloved Rector of this parish, is no novelty in the Church of God. It may be said of this office, that it has existed wherever the Church has existed in its primitive form and organization. The Bishop has been the presiding, ordaining, and governing officer in every age, from the Apostolic to our own; and we are confident that the history of the past, in this respect, will be the history of the future. I use the eloquent language of one of our own living Bishops, when I

say, "Throw out of view, the miraculous powers of St. Paul (which appertained obviously not to his office, but were only qualifications for it,) and you have precisely the office as exercised by Titus and Timothy, the office held by Epaphroditus, Silvanus, Andronicus, and Junias, under the title of Apostles; the office which Barnabas, the Apostle, held in conjunction with St. Paul; the office indicated by the Epistles of St. John to the Angels of the Asiatic Churches; the office held, in the very next age, by Polycarp, Clement, and Ignatius; the office of a Bishop, as the Church has maintained it from those early times; the office of a Bishop, as we now maintain it. It was not merely at Jerusalem, but wherever the Gospel had penetrated, that this officer in the Church is found. The polished philosophers of Greece had submitted to the Gospel, and this officer is among them. The Christian faith had established itself at Rome, and he is there. The Gospel had pushed its conquests beyond the Ganges, and he is there. Ethiopia had stretched out her hands unto God, and he is there; exercising the same authority, submitted to with the same readiness, and providing, in the same way, for the perpetuation of the Ministry in the Christian Church. Here, then, are the facts in the case: Christ appointed the Apostles; the Apostles govern the Church and ordain its pastors; officers with such Apostolic authority and powers are found in the Church in all countries, immediately upon the death of the Apostles. Such officers are the Bishops of our Church."*

The injunction given to Timothy by St. Paul, in the text, both being in what we now term the Episcopal office, seemed to make a consideration of the constitution of the Christian Ministry, as existing in Apostolic and primitive times, and as transmitted to the present age, both natural and appropriate. In our hasty view of it at this time, we have not been consciously influenced by any uncharitable feelings towards those Christians who are without such a Ministry as our own, but who may yet be our equals or superiors in true spirituality and devotion. Our discussion has reference to an important

* Bishop De Lancey's sermon at the consecration of Bishop Eastburn, in 1842.

and disputed ecclesiastical question, and not to personal character; and while we feel bound to adhere to an order of things which has, as we believe, come down to us from the holy Apostles, and from the remotest ages of Christian antiquity, and while we regard that order preeminently calculated to promote the highest interests of the Church, amidst all the changes and chances of this mortal life,—we, at the same time, are ready to pay our cheerful tribute of respect to true piety wherever we discover it; and to say, with all our heart, “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”

II. Let us now briefly consider *the manner in which the duties of the Ministry should be fulfilled*, especially the duties of that order of the Ministry to which our attention is more particularly directed on this occasion.

St. Paul says to the Ephesian Bishop, “Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

The various orders of the Ministry have their peculiar functions and responsibilities; but in some respects their duties are coincident and identical. The Presbyter and the Deacon, equally with the Bishop, must be watchful in all things, patient in tribulation, faithful in preaching the Gospel, and diligent in every part of their sacred office, so as to make full proof of their Ministry. In the four preceding verses, St. Paul had said to his son in the faith, “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” Then come the words of the text, and they include, in a condensed form, the whole duty of the Ministry, to whichever order they may be addressed.

In the midst of the unfavorable circumstances by which Timothy was surrounded, hemmed in as he was by the world, the flesh, and the devil, he was to be vigilant in all things, and to carefully guard against all those fallacies by which Satan and his emissaries were endeavoring to seduce men from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. "He was to endure cheerfully all the afflictions to which his zeal and faithfulness might expose him, from false brethren, or avowed enemies; to perform the work of an evangelist, in the several places to which he might have access; and to make full proof of his ministry, by trying to the uttermost every method of doing good to the souls of men, in the exercise of all its duties."*

What a pregnant exhortation is this to every commissioned ambassador of Christ, and especially to every Bishop in the Church of God! As the whole foundation of religion, and all the hope of salvation rest upon Christ, His ministers have an office of great responsibility. Men are all sinners in the sight of a holy God. They are "very far gone from original righteousness," and there is no spiritual health in them. Jesus Christ has redeemed them with His blood; and now He requires that they surrender their souls to Him as the purchase of His sufferings on the atoning cross. He has revealed to them the oracles of God, and committed them to His stewards to keep, and to His ambassadors to proclaim. These oracles make known to us the character of God as infinitely holy, and the nature of man as desperately wicked; and yet they open to sinful man a way of reconciliation to his offended Maker, in which God can be just, and at the same time the justifier of those who believe in Jesus. A treasure is committed to the Ministry of Christ, in its divers orders, when it is commissioned to proclaim these blessed truths to a world lying in wickedness. Contemplating our own sinfulness, we who are entrusted with this Ministry may well exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Who is able to stand between the living and the dead, to ascend to heaven with the wants of men, and to descend to them with the threatenings of the

*Dr. Thomas Scott.

Divine law, and with the conditions and promises of the Gospel of peace? This treasure is committed to us as earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

It must be obvious to all, that the great object of the Ministry is to bring men to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. This is the great object of the Ministry in each of its separate orders; and the higher one is advanced in the sacred office, the more solemn is the responsibility resting upon him to do the work of an evangelist, and to make full proof of his Ministry. We read in the twentieth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, that our Divine Lord called His disciples unto Him and said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." It is surely "enough for the disciple to be as his Master." When our Lord thus speaks of the practice of the world in temporal things, and the lordly domination which those in civil power exercise over the people, He is far from allowing it to be right in them; but he adduces their evil example to teach most emphatically that it must not be so with His ministers. The history of the Church affords mournful proof of the need of the command and example of our Saviour in this respect. Even with this precept before their eyes, how often has it been the case that the higher the ministers of Christ have risen in wealth and power, the more has their conduct been like that of worldly men! Let it not be so *among us*. He that takes the lowest part of this Ministry should become in consequence more humble in his own eyes, considering how unworthy he is to unloose the latchet of his Master's shoes; much less worthy to serve at His table, and to teach the momentous truths of His Gospel. Advancement in this Ministry should increase his meekness and humbleness of mind. He especially who would be chief, or, rather, he who

ventures to take upon himself the highest grade of this office and ministration, should be the servant of all : in labors more abundant, and in heart and soul more devoted to his Lord's work, and more conformed to His example.

At the time of the original appointment of Deacons in the Church of God, the Apostles gave, as a chief reason for the introduction of this order of the Ministry, the opportunity it would secure to them of giving themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." And in the text, when St. Paul says to Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry;" he certainly intimates that the preaching of the Gospel is a prominent and indispensable part of the duty of those who are overseers in the Church of Christ. So far as we can judge, the term "Evangelist," in the New Testament, simply signified one who preached the Gospel, ordinarily from place to place, like our modern Missionaries, and it was not applied exclusively to any one order of the Ministry. A Deacon might be an Evangelist, an Elder or Presbyter might be an Evangelist, and a Bishop might be an Evangelist. But inasmuch as the Bishop is promoted to the highest grade of the Ministry, he should be an evangelist preeminently. He should more especially give himself to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

The preaching of the Gospel is the great ordinance which an infinitely wise and merciful God has instituted to be the instrument of propagating the doctrines of eternal life; of converting souls to Christ, and spreading His Church or kingdom here on the earth. Without this ordinance, the ways of Sion would mourn, and few would come to her solemn feasts. "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" In preaching, Christ's ministers more especially and most powerfully act in His name. It is "as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead." As our Priest, His ministers represent Him in prayer and in administering the sacraments. They show forth His death, though they can add nothing to

His sacrifice. As He is our King, His ministers, by His authority, bear rule in His Church. But it is as our Prophet that His power is chiefly shown in His ministers; in proclaiming that word which, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, renews the heart, convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and bringing forth in them the fruits of good living. This instrumentality appears so weak and inadequate, that human wisdom calls it "the foolishness of preaching;" but through the mighty power of the Holy Ghost it is sufficient to renovate the world; and had all the ministers of Christ, of every grade and in every age, been faithful and true, we can hardly doubt that before this time all the ends of the earth would have seen the salvation of God. Still, weak and fallible as are those who are put in trust with the Gospel Ministry, the mighty work of the world's conversion is steadily progressing, and in God's own time every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We have already observed that the higher (if we may call it higher) Christ's ministers are advanced in office, the more especially does it become their duty to "preach the word, in season, out of season," and in every respect to make full proof of their Ministry. When St. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel," while he by no means intended to slight or undervalue the sacrament in question, he evidently meant that preaching was the great purpose, the chief duty of his Apostolic office. Baptism was administered principally by those who were in the other orders of the Ministry, under Apostolic appointment; the Apostles confirming those who had been baptized, but giving themselves mainly to the preaching of the Gospel, and thus doing the work of evangelists. And when, in any subsequent age of the world, the ministers of Christ have been less devoted to this important work, in consequence of their advancement to the highest stations; apparently more solicitous about personal dignity and official prerogative, than to make full proof of their Ministry, as servants of the Church, and as disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus,—they have fur-

nished sad proof of a wide departure from what the Saviour taught, and His Apostles practised.

This, then, is the conclusion of the matter, the point to which our text and subject lead; that it is the duty of those who succeed the Apostles, in the same office and ministration, to follow their example, and to labor in word and doctrine more abundantly than any other ministers of Christ. He who desires or accepts the Episcopal office, he who would be greatest amongst us, who consents to take upon himself this high responsibility,—should be, of all men, the most meek in his deportment, and the most devoted and unremitting in the Gospel ministrations, and in preaching especially. Those who fill this office are, ordinarily, somewhat advanced in life, and experienced in the Ministry. They should be eminent for piety and prudence, for holy zeal, and knowledge of the Scriptures. Their office, when it is duly respected, adds weight to what they teach, and renders their preaching more profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, than the same ministrations of the word from others. This may be stated as a general rule; and the well-known fact that it is a general rule, should serve to incite all Bishops to be diligent, as evangelists, in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation among their fellow men, and in holding forth the word of life in the midst of a darkened and sinful world. In order that our Bishops may make full proof of their Ministry as evangelists, or preachers of the Gospel, they should, ordinarily, as I fully believe, have congregations of their own, in addition to their ministrations among the various parishes and Missionary stations of their Dioceses. That in this country, and in our Church, it would be expedient, to adopt the full Cathedral system of the Church of England, I will not presume to assert. But sure I am, after an experience of ten years in the Episcopate, that even where Bishops are not Rectors of parishes,* there should be, if possible, some

* The writer has serious doubts as to the expediency of making the Bishops Rectors of organized parishes. He confesses that for his own part he is much inclined to favor the plans adopted or projected by the Bishops of Illinois, California, and Minnesota, so far as he understands them. In his opinion, the Bishops' Churches should be free, the Bishops being supported chiefly by endowments or assessments; due provision being made, by those concerned,

provision by which, in the places of their residence, they might have free and unrestrained opportunity to exercise their functions as preachers of the Gospel, when not engaged in their official visitations. With the assistance of Presbyters or Deacons, such a provision would not necessarily interfere with their Diocesan work; and they would generally be more efficient, useful and happy in their office, as well as more likely to maintain a high tone of personal piety, and to become increasingly fitted to sympathize with both the Clergy and the people in the cares and trials of their respective positions and circumstances. This subject is one that is undoubtedly destined to receive the earnest consideration of our Church; and, in my humble judgment, the more it is considered, the more general will be the conviction that every possible facility should be afforded to the Bishops to make full proof of their Ministry, at home and abroad, and to enable them to exercise, unremittingly, their holy office as preachers of the Gospel, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Was not the plan now referred to, a general one in primitive times? It was favored by our late Presiding Bishop Griswold, who was himself eminent for his Apostolic and primitive piety, and for his holy zeal in his Episcopal and evangelical labors. He also left on record this interesting and valuable testimony, in connection with his opinion that Bishops should usually have charge of congregations of their own,—that “if Episcopacy were what it was in the first three centuries; the Dioceses not too large; the Bishop truly the head of the family, laboring incessantly for their temporal and eternal good; declaring faithfully all the counsel of God; and giving, in his own life, an example of humility, faith and love,—the greater part of those who are called Protestants would admire, and, we may hope, soon embrace it.”

I may add here, that if all of us who are invested with the Episcopate were, in spirit and life, like the sainted man whose

for such clerical assistance as may be needed, and for a partial support of the Bishops, if necessary.

In all such Churches, the writer would have exemplary moderation as to ceremonials, the appointed services being performed in the simplest manner, such as might characterize the humblest parish Church.

words I have just quoted, we should magnify our office by an undissembled humility, living near to the Saviour, doing the work of evangelists, and making full proof of our Ministry. While holding decided views as to the claims of our own Church, in its ministry, polity and worship, and never compromising our doctrinal and ecclesiastical principles; he was the last among his peers to make any ostentatious reference to personal dignity, or to bring into undue prominence the prerogatives of his order. It was emphatically safe and wise to adopt, with reference to him, the ancient maxim, "Do nothing without your Bishop;" for he was a most judicious counsellor, and a true Father in God to the Clergy and Laity of his charge. It was one of his characteristic sayings, that "those who are best qualified for the office of Bishop, and most sensible of its responsibilities, will be the last to seek for it; and such should be sought." We may well be thankful that such a man has graced our American Episcopate; and that others, like-minded, both among the dead and the living, have shown and are now showing to all Christendom that the Apostolic spirit was not confined to the Apostolic age; but that in these latter times, and in this new world, the Church of God, in its Apostolic and primitive form, has produced Apostolic men, not only in office, but also in character and labors; men after God's own heart, men of self-denial and of prayer, wholly consecrated to the Saviour, and knowing nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Most thankful should we be, fathers and brethren, to the Great Head of the Church, that the privilege of belonging to an ecclesiastical body so primitive and Apostolic, is ours. Let us manifest our sense of this blessing by making a right use of it. Let those who are ordained to the lowest grade of this Ministry use the office of a Deacon so well, as to purchase to themselves a good degree, and be qualified and worthy to be advanced to the higher ministries in the Church. The second grade of the Ministry, the Elders and settled pastors, are the most useful and important of the three orders, as on them, chiefly, under God, depends the practical ministry of the word, the training of souls for heaven, and the prosperity of the

Church. These, of course, are the most numerous; and yet we have great need that their number should be increased; and most earnestly should we all, ministers and people, pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest. The fitness of those who are admitted to the Episcopal office, amongst us, depends very much on the Conventions that elect them,—on their choosing those who are best qualified for the office; and the usefulness of those appointed will depend largely on the sympathy and aid which they receive from their brethren of the Clergy, on the respect shown them by the Churches, and on the prayers of all that God will guide and bless them in the very arduous duties to which they are called. In this way, they who are the pastors of pastors, and overseers in the Church of God, will be enabled to be watchful in all things, to endure afflictions, to do the work of evangelists, and to make full proof of their Ministry.

And now, my dear and reverend brother, it becomes my duty to say a few closing words to you, in view of the subject we have been considering, and of the solemn act in which we are about to engage, by which you will be invested with the awful responsibilities of a Bishop in the Church of Christ, and be sent forth to do the work of an evangelist, and to make full proof of your Ministry, in that grade in which the Apostles labored, and which, as a distinct order, has come down to us as a sacred trust from the gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls. My mind instinctively reverts to those early days of our ministry when, more than twenty-five years ago, we were Providentially brought together in a friendship that has only strengthened with the lapse of time, and which to me is among the most cherished treasures of my life. The changes of the world, under the ordering of an overruling Providence, have placed us in the close relation of Bishop and Presbyter; and to-day, here, in this far-off land, it is my lot and my privilege to assist in elevating you to that Scriptural and primitive Episcopate which we both so long associated with the venerable and beloved Griswold, and in the exercise of which he laid his hands upon us in the solemn services of

our ordination. We little dreamed in those days of such a scene as is now witnessed in this house of God, at this first Episcopal Consecration west of the Father of Waters. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Though, my dear brother, your consecration as Bishop involves a personal loss on my part which I can hardly bear to contemplate, yet, for the sake of the Church, and for the sake of that infant Diocese which to-day canonically passes from my temporary care to your life-long charge, I can heartily welcome you to your new office, and congratulate the whole Church upon such an accession to the number of its reverend Fathers. Your earnest fidelity in your various parochial fields of labor, is a pledge to us all that you will be faithful as a Bishop,—faithful to your own soul, and faithful to the pastors and flocks over which you are to be placed in the Lord. You are to enter a field most interesting and peculiar as to its civil and political history and associations, and one that calls loudly for laborers in its spiritual harvest. It is a field whose soil has been made sacred by the blood of martyred patriots, in that incipient contest which was but introductory to the unhappy civil war in which a just God is now visiting us for our national sins; and where helpless and innocent victims have been cruelly sacrificed to the relentless spirit of sedition and rebellion; a field in which many have toiled and struggled for what they believed to be great and important principles, and one that in future ages will be regarded with deep interest by the historian and the philanthropist. It is a field in which you will be called not only to “endure afflictions,” but to “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” in laboring to promote the interests of that kingdom which is not of this world. Its Clergy and Laity have endeared themselves to my heart, as I have gone in and out among them for more than four years past; and I now commit them to you in the confident assurance that you will watch for their souls as one that must give account to God. You will be an additional Episcopal laborer and evangelist in this vast domain of the West. He who was the pioneer Missionary Bishop* throughout all this

* The Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, D. D., now Bishop of Wisconsin, who was the Presiding Consecrator on this occasion.

wide region, including, as a portion of it, both Iowa and Kansas, and who, in God's good Providence, graces this occasion with his venerable presence, can feel that he has not labored in vain, nor spent his strength for nought. Almost thirty years have now passed away since he was set apart for the Missionary Jurisdiction of Missouri and Indiana, which Jurisdiction was subsequently so enlarged as to include the whole North West; and now he is permitted to see six organized Dioceses, with their respective Bishops, besides two Missionary Bishops, all within the limits of his former charge, all regarding him with respect and reverence, and all unitedly desiring and praying that in his declining years he may increasingly enjoy the comforts of the Gospel of Christ, and finally pass from his wearing labors in the militant Church on earth to share the rewards of the faithful in the Church triumphant in heaven.

Go forth, my brother, in the strength of the Lord, and in the power of His might; and be assured you will be followed by the sincere prayers and affectionate sympathies of many who have loved you as a brother in the Ministry of Christ, and as a pastor and teacher in holy things. The parish where we are assembled, and the Diocese with which for a few moments longer you will be connected, will deeply regret your departure from them; but they will regard you with an abiding interest, and ever rejoice in your success and happiness. Go forth to the waiting field to which God has called you, and enter upon your arduous but glorious work. The Clergy and Laity who have so unanimously designated you as their Bishop are ready to receive and welcome you with all their hearts, and to gather around you and sustain you as you are toiling on in the work of the Lord. By the blessing of the God of nations upon high and patriotic determinations and exertions, Kansas stands forth before the world as a young and noble State, saved from the great evil of human bondage. By the blessing of the same God upon your faithful labors, and upon the labors of all who shall there proclaim the everlasting Gospel, as the only hope of sinful men, and as the only safeguard of human society, in all its important interests,

and in all its successive generations,—may that fair land become as the garden of the Lord; and may all who shall inhabit it, in your day, and in all coming time, not only enjoy the rich benefits of a high social civilization; but may they also rejoice in the possession of that still more precious boon, that blessed liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free!

APPENDIX.

I.

The Consecration of the Rev. Thomas Hubbard Vail, D. D., as Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Kansas, took place in, Trinity Church, in the city of Muscatine, in the State and Diocese of Iowa on Thursday, the Fifteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and Sixty-four.

Morning Prayer was read by the Rev. Geo. W. Watson and the Rev. F. Emerson Judd, of the Diocese of Iowa, the Rev. John Ufford, of the Diocese of Ohio, and the Rev. Horatio N. Powers, of Iowa, reading the Lessons.

The Ante-Communion service was read by the Right Rev. Gregory T. Bedell, D. D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio; the Right Rev. Henry J. Whitehouse, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Illinois, reading the Epistle; and the Right Rev. Jackson Kemper, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin, reading the Gospel.

The sermon was preached by the Right Rev. Henry W. Lee, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa, from II. Timothy, iv. 5. "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

The Bishop-elect, vested with his Rochet, was then presented to the Presiding Consecrator (Kemper) by Bishops Whitehouse and Bedell. The Testimonials having been called for, those from the Diocese of Kansas were read by the Rev. Horatio N. Powers; those from the various Standing Committees of the Dioceses in the United States by the Rev. Hiram Stone, Chaplain at Fort Leavenworth, in the Diocese of Kansas; and those from the various Bishops by the Rev. Robert H. Clarkson, D. D., of the Diocese of Illinois. The commission from the Presiding Bishop (Brownell) of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, authorizing Bishop Kemper to take order for the Consecration, was read by the Rev. John Ufford.

The prescribed promise of conformity and obedience having been made by the Bishop-elect, as well as the exhortation to the congregation by the Presiding Consecrator, the Litany was read by Bishop Whitehouse. The Presiding Consecrator then put the various questions laid down in the service, which were answered by the Bishop-elect; who then put on the rest of the Episcopal Habit, in which he was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Clarkson and the Rev. Mr. Stone.

The act of Consecration was then performed by Bishop Kemper, assisted by all the other Bishops present.

Bishop Lee then proceeded in the Communion Service, Bishop Kemper consecrating the elements, and administering to the Bishops, and the various Bishops administering to the Clergy and people. The congregation was dismissed by Bishop Kemper with the Apostolic Benediction.

Besides the Clergy already named, the following were present on the occasion: the Rev. John Hochuly, the Rev. William Y. Johnson, the Rev. Walter F. Lloyd, the Rev. C. S. Percival, the Rev. C. C. Townsend, and the Rev. John Chamberlain, deacon, of the Diocese of Iowa; and the Rev. B. R. Gifford and the Rev. F. B. Nash, of the Diocese of Illinois.

II.

The Diocese of Kansas was organized at Wyandott on the eleventh day of August, 1859. The Territory of Kansas was included in the Missionary Jurisdiction of the North West, until October, 1856, when the House of Bishops, in General Convention, set apart the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska as a separate Missionary Jurisdiction. The Rev. Jacob L. Clark, D. D., of Connecticut, was elected the Missionary Bishop, but declined the appointment. The Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, D. D., Missionary Bishop of the North West, thereupon consented to exercise the Episcopal office in Kansas, as Bishop in temporary charge. In April, 1860, a Special Convention of the newly organized Diocese was held at Topeka, in which it was resolved to proceed to the election of a Bishop. The Rev. Heman Dyer, D. D., of New York, was declared to be elected. He declined the office; and in September, 1860, the Diocese was placed, by the Convention, under the provisional Charge of the Rt. Rev. Henry W. Lee, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa. At the Fifth Annual Convention, held at Atchison on the fourteenth day of September, 1864, the Rev. Thomas Hubbard Vail, D. D., of Muscatine, Iowa, was unanimously elected Bishop.

The Diocese was organized before Kansas was admitted into the Union as a State, and originally included, as a Territorial Diocese, a portion of the present Territory of Colorado. By the action of the General Convention, in 1862, the limits of the Diocese were made to correspond with those of the State; the Convention of the Diocese and the Bishop in charge jointly requesting that such action might be had on the part of that body.

III.

LETTER OF CONSECRATION.

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.

Be it known, by these presents, unto the faithful in Christ Jesus throughout the world, and unto all men, That we, by the grace of God the Father, and through the sending of His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, to-wit: Jackson Kemper, D. D., LL. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin, Henry John Whitehouse, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Illinois, Henry Washington Lee, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa, and Gregory Thurston Bedell, D. D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio, under the protection of Almighty God, and for His glory, on the Thursday in the fourth Ember-Week, being the fifteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four, in Trinity Church, in the City of Muscatine, and State and Diocese of Iowa, in the presence of divers of the Clergy and Laity, and in the public congregation, according to the established order of the said Protestant Episcopal Church, and in conformity with the Canons thereof, did admit and send forth our well-beloved in Christ, Thomas Hubbard Vail, D. D., a Presbyter of the Diocese of Iowa, and Rector of Trinity Church, in the City of Muscatine, of whose sufficiency in good learning, soundness in the faith, and purity of manners, we were fully ascertained, unto the Administration and Charge of Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Kansas, he having been duly elected thereto by the Convention of the said Diocese, and did then and there ordain and consecrate him, the said Thomas Hubbard Vail, for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church of God, his consecration having been duly consented to by the Dioceses and Bishops of the said Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals, in Trinity Church, at the City of Muscatine aforesaid, on the day and in the year herein above written.

JACKSON KEMPER, [SEAL]

Bishop of Wisconsin.

HENRY J. WHITEHOUSE, [SEAL]

Bishop of Illinois.

HENRY W. LEE, [SEAL]

Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa.

GREGORY T. BEDELL, [SEAL]

Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio.

Almighty God and most merciful Father, who of thine infinite goodness hast given thine only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer, and the Author of everlasting life; who, after he had made perfect our redemption by his death, and was ascended into heaven, poured down his gifts abundantly upon men, making some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Doctors, to the edifying and making perfect his Church; grant, we beseech thee, to this thy servant such grace, that he may evermore be ready to spread abroad thy gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with thee; and use the authority given him, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help: so that as a wise and faithful servant, giving to thy family their portion in due season, he may at last be received into everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who, with thee and the Holy Chost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*